

1998 PHASE I TESTING

In July of 1998, TAA conducted a Phase I archeological study of the areas of potential impact for two storm water management ponds, a wetland mitigation area, and the construction of a new segment of Route 275 (Old Wilmington Road). The study area consisted of approximately ten acres on the north side of Rt. 48 from just west of a tributary of Hyde Run east to a point before the intersection of 48 and Old Wilmington Road in the eastern half of Section 2 (Figure 49).

For the fieldwork, the study area was divided into four study areas, beginning at the southeastern end with Area 1 and running northwest to Area 4. Test units were 2.5 foot squares and were excavated 50-100 feet apart. In some locations, these test units were supplemented with test units. Soils were screened through ¼ inch mesh hardware cloth, and vertical excavation was by pedological horizons, e.g., humus (Ao), plowzone (Ap), slopewash (C), and subsoil (B1, B2, etc.).

Area 4 included the western side of Hyde Run along the Pike, the existing wetlands, the proposed wetland mitigation areas and the area adjacent to the Whitman-Clark farm complex. The Whitman-Clark Farm Complex had been reduced to rubble, except for a part of a standing wall, at the time of the 1998 survey.

Whitman-Clark Agricultural Complex (N-10081)

Site Description and Historic Background

The Whitman-Clark complex was located on the north side of Lancaster Pike, midway between Loveville Road and Old Wilmington Road (Figure 50). The buildings of the Whitman/Clark complex have been destroyed since the architectural study was prepared. Initially, no archeological work was required within the right-of-way because earth moving activities were thought to have destroyed the archeological potential within the right-of-way as well. Revised plans for this part of the road resulted in the need for more extensive surveying on the north and east sides of the farm complex, and this was carried out in 1998.

The complex once consisted of a two and one-half story, L-shaped vernacular farmhouse of frame construction built on a nineteenth century stone foundation that has been stuccoed. The walls were covered in asbestos shingle siding, and the gabled roof was also shingled. The farmhouse showed the influence of the Queen Anne tradition in various architectural elements such as the wrap around porch with turned wood posts, carved trim, polygonal bay, stained glass window in the front hall and interior milled woodwork. A board and batten barn was also probably built on a stone foundation from an earlier structure. A carriage house, chicken houses and a garage were also associated with the main structure (Benenson et al. 1988).

Joseph Bowman acquired the property in 1842 from the Sisters of Charity of Wilmington, who had acquired it in 1841 through an Act of Legislature. It was purchased by Joseph Neis in 1847. No buildings or improvements were mentioned in that deed, but an 1863 deed from Neis' executor transferred the property with buildings to Benjamin Franklin Whitman, the grandson of Neis. The stone foundations may date from the Neis or

Whitman ownership. The house was probably constructed on the older foundation shortly after 1900 by Lewis H. Clark, who purchased the property from Whitman and owned it from 1901 until 1988 (Benenson et al. 1988).

The area immediately to the west of the farm complex had had all the top soil removed by heavy machinery and had been planted in grass. Prior to the grass planting, considerable erosion had occurred, with the deflated deposits washing into the Hyde Creek floodplain. Further west, the developers of the Fox Run development dumped their spoils which, again, washed into the floodplain. As a result, the creek and the proposed wetland area had been extensively silted in and standing water, cattails and other wetland vegetation were present. No test units were excavated in this area.

TUs 36 and 37 were excavated on the west side of the creek – TU 36 to the east of the Whitman-Clark complex, TU 37 to the north (Figure 50). The soil profile in TU 36 indicated slope wash from disturbed areas around the house site. Artifacts included nine lime soda windowpane fragments (post-1864), an unidentified curved clear manganese sherd dating 1880-1915, 11.8 grams of mortar and 11.5 grams of brick fragments, all from the Ap. A deposit consisting of pockets of ash and asphalt lay at the interface of the Ap and B horizons. Below this was a gleyed B horizon. TU 37 exhibited an Ao/A of 0.2 feet overlying a heavy B horizon. The artifacts, all from the Ao/A, consisted of a piece of redware and two cut nail fragments (post-1790). These materials may have originated from the Whitman-Clark complex, as a house was present on the property by 1849 (Rea and Price map). The materials are not *in situ* and do not indicate an intact site.

Area 3 was that area at the western edge of the Fox Run development, between the outer edge of the development and Lancaster Pike. This area had been tested during the 1988 work by means of three TUs in what was then the proposed right-of-way. In 1998, three units (TUs 33-35) were excavated in more or less undisturbed settings at a 100-foot interval across this area, between the housing development and a landscaped berm (Figure 51). TUs 33 and 34 indicate that this area had been graded, presumably to build up the berm that screens the housing development from the road. A fill layer overlay the subsoil in TU 34; this yielded lime soda windowpane fragments (post-1864), four pieces of glass, oyster shell fragments, and brick, concrete and mortar fragments. TUs 33 and 35 yielded no cultural material. TU 35 was near the edge of the existing wetlands on the east side of Hyde Run, and the soil was laminar and slightly gleyed, indicating poor drainage. A runoff ditch from the housing development emptied into the creek and storm water was channeled by a large metal pipe into the creek from two metal tulins. Due to prior disturbance and poor drainage, no further work was recommended for this area.

Area 2 was northwest of the Ingleside Care Center, and was a mowed field encompassing the area from the proposed center line for the Lancaster Pike and Old Wilmington Road Connector to the Fox Run (?) housing development. Nineteen 2.5 foot square test units (TUs 11-29) and six test units (TUs J-L, N-P) were excavated here (Figure 52). Initial testing was conducted at a 100 foot interval as this area is lower than the surrounding topography, with the smaller TUs excavated in between the larger TUs. The field was dissected by a series of channels approximately parallel to the proposed connector, probably indicating storm water runoff and poor drainage. An open drainage ditch separated this field from the housing development to the north.

According to adjacent local landowners, this drainage channel has been meandering north from the field onto their properties.

All excavations units revealed a plowzone, with a thickness that increased gradually from the edge of Old Wilmington Road to Lancaster Pike, from circa .7' to 2.0' in TU 29, where it overlies a buried Ap horizon. These two zones were separated by a thin yellow C horizon, suggestive of a short period of cultivation abandonment. The origin of the upper Ap is either cultural, such as a fill soil which was then plowed, or a continuously deposited slopewash from the higher portion of the field that was plowed, or a combination of both.

All artifacts recovered from Area 2 came from plowed soils. In TU 29, the artifacts all came from the upper plowzone. Based on the test units, the artifacts appeared to be lightly scattered across the survey area but were never more numerous in any one location (TU 29, for example produced the greatest number, with a redware sherd, two twentieth century bottle sherds, three post-1864 windowpane sherds and two unidentified clear glass sherds). Post-1864 windowpane fragments, clear glass sherds, and post-1880 bottle sherds were mixed with redware fragments, twentieth century bottle glass, a Styrofoam fragment, and a whiteware and a stoneware sherd. This, combined with the low density and uniformity of distribution of the artifacts, seem to indicate that these materials were field scatter over the years the property was farmed. Historic maps (Heald 1820 "Roads of New Castle County"; the 1849 Rea and Price "Map of New Castle County, Delaware"; and the 1881 Hopkins "Map of New Castle County, Delaware" - Appendix II: Maps 1, 2 and 4) show no structures on the north side of the Pike in the survey area. No further work was recommended for this survey area.

Area 1 was located around the Ingleside Care Center at the southeastern end of the study area and was situated on a knoll that sloped gradually north down to a flat. Thirteen 2.5 foot square test units (TUs 1-10 and 30-32) and ten test units (TUs A-F, I and K) were excavated at the top and base of the knoll. Testing was generally conducted at a 100 foot interval, but this was decreased to 50 feet in areas where cultural materials were encountered, as well as around a small grove of mature trees. An asphalt path with a circular terminus began at the sidewalk outside the Center and ended within this grove. That portion of Area 1 directly in front of the Center was not tested as much of it was paved and extensively landscaped. All the test units in Area 1 revealed a plowzone. The subsoil closest to the Center and at the highest point on the knoll was made up of decomposing saprolite.

TU 9 produced the most artifacts: one pearlware sherd, a redware sherd, two clear manganese cylindrical pickle/relish bottle fragments (chilled iron mold, 1880-1915), two similarly dated square/rectangular bottle fragments, one cast iron fragment, one brass wood screw, and a Styrofoam cup fragment. Other items recovered included brick fragments, lime soda windowpane fragments (post-1864), tar paper, and a golf ball. Thus this mélange in TU 9 is typical of the artifacts recovered throughout the area; it is felt that if a site does exist in this general area, it would be found north of TU 9, outside of the project area. Area 1 appeared to have been an area of plowed field scatter, and no additional work was recommended.